

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 4 MOSCOW 14255

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, US

SUBJ: REFLECTIONS ON LEAVING THE SOVIET UNION

1. AS I PREPARE TO LEAVE THE SOVIET UNION--WHERE I FIRST SERVED ALMOST 30 YEARS AGO--I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE USEFUL IF I WERE TO SET DOWN SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE COUNTRY AND OUR RELATIONS WITH IT.

2. THE PROCESS OF CHANGE. HAVING LIVED IN THE SOVIET UNION DURING STALIN'S TIME, I CAN SAY FROM MY OWN EXPERIENCE THAT THERE HAVE BEEN CONSIDERABLE CHANGES FOR THE BETTER OVER THE INTERVENING YEARS IN THE INTERNAL FUNCTIONING OF SOVIET SOCIETY AND IN THE POSITION OF FOREIGN REPRESENTATIVES. HOWEVER MUCH WE MAY CRITICIZE AND DEPLORE PRESENT ASPECTS OF SOVIET REALITY, THE PROGRESS WHICH HAS BEEN MADE SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED. APART FROM THE IMPROVEMENT OF GENERAL LIVING STANDARDS, THE SENSE OF ALL-PERVASIVE TERROR HAS GONE, EMIGRATION OF AT LEAST SOME SEGMENTS OF THE POPULATION HAS BEEN SANCTIONED TO A LIMITED BUT SIGNIFICANT EXTENT, AND THE TREATMENT OF OPPOSITIONIST ELEMENTS, WHILE STILL HARSH BY WESTERN STANDARDS, HAS BECOME LESS SEVERE. DESPITE BUILT-IN RIGIDITIES AND INERTIA, THE REGIME HAS SHOWN A DEGREE OF FLEXIBILITY IN ADAPTING TO A MORE COMPLEX SITUATION INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY AND THERE SEEMS TO BE A GROWING REALIZATION THAT SIMPLISTIC COLUTIONS ARE NOT AVAILABLE. FOR
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FOREIGNERS, ALTHOUGH THE RESTRICTIONS AND FRUSTRATIONS OF LIFE IN THE USSR CONTINUE TO BE FORMIDABLE, THERE HAS BEEN A RELAXATION OF CONTROLS TO A DEGREE WHICH PERMITS WIDER TRAVEL AND MUCH MORE OPEN ACCESS TO SOVIET OFFICIALS.

CONTACTS WITH NON-OFFICIAL SOVIETS ARE ALSO FREER THAN BEFORE. THE PACE OF CHANGE HAS BEEN UNEVEN AND, AS NADEZHDA MANDELSTAM HAS SAID, PROGRESS HAS BEEN "ASTONISHINGLY SLOW". NEVERTHELESS, IT HAS TAKEN PLACE AND IN ITSELF MUST BE SEEN AS A HOPEFUL PORTENT. BUT THE SLOWNESS OF THE PROCESS NEEDS CONSTANTLY TO BE EMPHASIZED. CHANGE IN THE SOVIET UNION TAKES PLACE IN A LONG TIME-FRAME; THINKING OF IT IN TERMS OF GENERATIONS IS MORE REALISTIC THAN THE SHORTER TIME CYCLES TO WHICH WE ARE ACCUSTOMED IN THE WEST.

3. SOCIETY. MUCH HAS BEEN WRITTEN ON CURRENT ASPECTS OF SOVIET SOCIETY AND THIS IS NOT THE PLACE TO GO INTO THE SUBJECT IN DETAIL. CERTAINLY, THE MATERIALISM OF THE AVERAGE CITIZEN IS STRIKING; THESE ARE PEOPLE DEPRIVED FOR LONG YEARS OF THE GOOD THINGS OF LIFE AND THEY ARE ON THE MAKE TO ACQUIRE WHAT THEY CAN OF THE SLOWLY INCREASING VOLUME OF CONSUMER GOODS WHICH IS BECOMING AVAILABLE. WITH THIS GOES A CYNICISM TOWARD IDEOLOGY, A WANING INTEREST IN PROFESSED COMMUNIST IDEALS, AND A CONSIDERABLE CREDIBILITY GAP ABOUT THE PROPAGANDA LINE. THIS IS PARTICULARLY TRUE REGARDING THE U.S., CONCERNING WHICH YEARS OF HOSTILE PROPAGANDA HAVE FAILED TO ERASE FEELINGS OF RESPECT AND EVEN AFFECTION, COMBINED WITH A DEEP SENSE OF INFERIORITY. AT THE SAME TIME, THE SENSE OF PATRIOTISM IS STRONG AMONG SOVIETS AND THE ARMED SERVICES OF THE USSR ARE ESTEEMED. PATIENCE, PASSIVITY AND TOUGHNESS HAVE TRADITIONALLY CHARACTERIZED THE RUSSIAN, AND THESE QUALITIES STILL STAND OUT. TAKEN TOGETHER WITH THE ELEMENT OF PATRIOTISM, THEY ADD UP TO SOMETHING FORMIDABLE, EVEN THOUGH THE MATERIALISM AND CYNICISM CONCERNING IDEOLOGY ARE ATTENUATING FACTORS.

4. NATIONALITIES. AS THE LAST GREAT EMPIRE, THE SOVIET REGIME HOLDS SWAY OVER MANY DIFFERENT NATIONALITIES, AND SOME OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT IT IS PRECISELY THE NATIONALITY PROBLEM WHICH IS ONE OF THE MOST VULNERABLE POINTS IN CONFIDENTIAL

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THE SOVIET STRUCTURE AND THE ONE WHICH WILL EVENTUALLY CAUSE ITS COLLAPSE. THIS UNDENIABLY IS A COMPLEX ISSUE AND FIRM CONCLUSIONS ARE RISKY IN THE ABSENCE OF MORE DATA. MY OWN VIEW IS THAT IT IS MOST UNLIKELY IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE (I.E., TWO OR THREE DECADES) THAT NATIONALITY PRESSURES WILL POSE INTOLERABLE STRAINS ON THE SOVIET SYSTEM. THE INSTRUMENTALITIES OF POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND MILITARY POWER ARE SO CLEARLY IN SLAV HANDS THAT IT DOES NOT SEEM REASONABLE TO EXPECT OUTRIGHT CHALLENGES FROM ANY NON-SLAV NATIONALITY; NOR DOES ONE DERIVE THE SENSE IN TRAVELING IN THE NON-RUSSIAN AREAS THAT RESENTMENT OF MOSCOW RULE IS SO STRONG AS TO LEAD TO SUCH CHALLENGES. THE RESENTMENT AND THE IRRITATION

UNDOUBTEDLY ARE PRESENT, BUT THE CONTROLS AND THE INDUCEMENTS OFFERED BY THE CENTRAL AUTHORITIES WOULD SEEM TO BE SUFFICIENT TO CONTAIN THEM TO MANAGEABLE LEVELS. THE PROBLEM DOES NOT END HERE, OF COURSE; RESISTANCE BY MAJOR NATIONALITIES TO RUSSIFICATION COULD INCREASE LOCAL TENSIONS AND, EQUALLY IMPORTANT, THE NATIONALITY QUESTION ADDS FUEL TO THE INEVITABLE SQUABBLES OVER RESOURCE ALLOCATION. "NATIONAL CADRES" ARE LIKELY, FOR EXAMPLE, TO RESIST LARGE INVESTMENTS IN SIBERIA IF THIS MEANS REDUCING THEIR SLICE OF THE INVESTMENT PIE.

5. ECONOMY. THE SOVIET ECONOMY, WHILE POWERFUL AND IMPRESSIVE IN SOME AREAS, IS IMBALANCED IN FAVOR OF HEAVY INDUSTRY AND GENERALLY LAGS IN COMPARISON WITH WESTERN INDUSTRIALIZED STATES IN TERMS OF EFFICIENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY. THE SOVIET UNION HAS BEEN DESCRIBED AS A "MIDDLE AGED ECONOMY", BUT ONE WONDERS, GIVEN ITS GLARING INCONSISTENCIES AND UNEVENNESS, IF EVEN THIS IS NOT GIVING IT MORE THAN ITS DUE. THE CENTRALIZED PLANNING SYSTEM PRODUCES GREAT RIGIDITY; WORKERS LACK INDUCEMENTS; MANAGERS ARE FEARFUL OF TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHANGE AND OPERATE IN A SYSTEM WHICH IN MANY RESPECTS ACTIVELY DISCOURAGES INNOVATION. NO REAL REFORM WHICH WOULD CORRECT THESE PROBLEMS IS IN SIGHT, AND THE SLOWING IN THE GROWTH OF THE LABOR FORCE WHICH IS NOTICEABLE NOW AND WILL GROW MORE MARKED IN THE FUTURE WILL SERIOUSLY HAMPER SOVIET EFFORTS TO IMPROVE ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE. NO ONE SHOULD THINK OF THE SOVIET ECONOMIC SYSTEM AS CONFIDENTIAL

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BEING ON THE VERGE OF COLLAPSE, BECAUSE IT IS NOT. IT WORKS AFTER A FASHION AND IT HAS PROVIDED A SOLID HEAVY INDUSTRIAL BASE AND THE WHEREWITHAL FOR AN IMPRESSIVE MILITARY MACHINE; MOREOVER, STARTING FROM A VERY LOW BASE, IT HAS MADE POSSIBLE A FAIRLY STEADY IF MODEST INCREASE IN LIVING STANDARDS FOR THE GENERAL POPULATION. THIS

BEING SAID, IT REMAINS THAT THE SOVIET ECONOMY IS WEAK IN IMPORTANT RESPECTS IN COMPARISON WITH OTHER ADVANCED STATES AND THERE SEEMS LITTLE PROSPECT THAT THIS WEAKNESS WILL BE OVERCOME.

6. SIBERIA. FOR THE FUTURE, THE GREATEST POTENTIAL FOR SOVIET ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND FOR EXPORT TRADE WOULD APPEAR TO LIE IN THE MINERAL AND ENERGY RESOURCES AVAILABLE IN SIBERIA. THIS WILL REQUIRE INPUT OF CAPITAL, TECHNOLOGY AND LABOR WHICH WILL IMPOSE GREAT STRAINS ON THE SOVIETS AND WILL CAUSE THEM TO LOOK INCREASINGLY TO THE WESTERN COUNTRIES AND JAPAN FOR ASSISTANCE.

7. AGRICULTURE. LITTLE NEED BE SAID ABOUT THE SOVIET

AGRICULTURAL SYSTEM. THE FUNCTIONING OF THE COLLECTIVE AND STATE FARMS IS NOTORIOUSLY INEFFICIENT, YET IT PROVIDES THE CONTROLS CONSIDERED NECESSARY BY THE REGIME AND THERE IS NO LIKELIHOOD OF ANY MEANINGFUL CHANGE. PLAGUED BY DIFFICULT CLIMATIC CONDITION, A SYSTEM WHICH IS OVERLY RIGID AND WHICH REQUIRES AN INORDINATE AMOUNT OF MANPOWER, THE SOVIET UNION CAN EXPECT INCREASING DIFFICULTIES IN MEETING ITS AGRICULTURAL NEEDS. ITS DEPENDENCE ON FOREIGN GRAIN IMPORTS, PARTICULARLY OF FEED GRAINS, IS LIKELY TO GROW.

8. TRADE AND INTERDEPENDENCE. ONE OF THE STRIKING ASPECTS OF SOVIET POLICY IN THE LAST DECADE HAS BEEN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 4 MOSCOW 14255

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

THE ACTIVE DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE WITH NON-COMMUNIST INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES AND THE EMPHASIS ON IMPORTATION OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY. SOME CONSIDER THAT THIS IS A TEMPORARY PHENOMENON AND, LIKE THE PERIODIC SPURTS OF SOVIET INTEREST IN EARLIER YEARS IN FOREIGN TRADE, WILL SOON BE SUPERSEDED BY A MORE INWARD-LOOKING POLICY CONSISTENT WITH PAST SOVIET EMPHASIS ON AUTARKY. I DO NOT AGREE WITH THIS POINT OF VIEW. IN PRACTICE, AND TO SOME EXTENT IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS, THE SOVIET UNION OVER THE PAST DECADE HAS MOVED IN THE DIRECTION OF GENUINE INTERDEPENDENCE. AUTARKY IS NO LONGER SEEN AS A FEASIBLE OR EVEN DESIREABLE GOAL, AND THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP SEEMS TO RECOGNIZE THAT STRESS ON THE AUTARKIC CONCEPT CAN HAVE NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON THE GROWTH OF SOVIET INDUSTRIAL AND SCIENTIFIC POWER. PART OF THIS IS DUE TO THE EMERGENCE OF THE SOVIET UNION AS A TRUE GLOBAL POWER WITH BOTH THE NEED AND THE CAPABILITY OF EXPLOITING TRADE AND RAW MATERIAL RESOURCES ON A WORLD SCALE-- A POSITION WHICH IT DID NOT ENJOY IN THE 20'S AND 30'S. ALSO, IT CAN BE SAID THAT IN THE PAST

SOVIET TECHNOLOGICAL IMPORTS WERE INTENDED TO HELP ACHIEVE AUTARKY, BUT THIS IS NO LONGER THE CASE. IN MOST INSTANCES, THE LARGE INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS BEING CONSTRUCTED IN THE USSR WITH THE HELP OF FOREIGN FIRMS ARE EXPLICITLY LINKED TO CONTINUING FOREIGN TRADE UNDERTAKINGS; LIKEWISE, THE DEVELOPMENT OF SIBERIAN RESOURCES AND THE HEIGHTENED
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EMPHASIS ON QUALITY OF OUTPUT AND WORK-EFFECTIVENESS ARE PROGRAMS WHICH CAN ONLY BE REALIZED THROUGH A LONG-TERM ASSOCIATION WITH FOREIGN ENTERPRISES.

9. POLITICAL INTERDEPENDENCE. THIS INTERDEPENDENCE, OF COURSE, IS REVEALED NOT ONLY IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD, BUT ALSO IN THE POLITICAL. TO AN UNPRECEDENTED DEGREE, THE USSR SINCE 1972 HAS COMMITTED ITSELF BY FORMAL AGREEMENT WITH THE U.S. AND SOME OTHER COUNTRIES TO LINKS WITH THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM, SOME INVOLVING AREAS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE FROM THE STANDPOINT OF NATIONAL SECURITY. THE US-SOVIET AGREEMENTS ON ABM, SALT, THE THRESHOLD TEST BAN AND PNE TREATIES, AND THE GRAIN AGREEMENT COME TO MIND IN THIS REGARD, AS WELL AS, ON A MULTILATERAL BASIS, THE NPT, PARTICIPATION IN THE LONDON GROUP OF NUCLEAR SUPPLIERS, AND, TO SOME EXTENT, THE HELSINKI AGREEMENT.

10. THIS TREND TOWARD GREATER PARTICIPATION IN THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM IS ENCOURAGING, ALTHOUGH IT IS CLEAR THAT IT REMAINS LIMITED AND GRUDGING IN MANY RESPECTS. IT WOULD SEEM DESIRABLE TO STIMULATE GREATER SOVIET INVOLVEMENT ON AN INTERNATIONAL SCALE IN SOME AREAS, SUCH AS IN A SYSTEM FOR FOOD RESERVES. SOVIET PARTICIPATION IN WORLD MONETARY PROGRAMS PROBABLY WOULD NOT BE BENEFICIAL AT THIS STAGE, ALTHOUGH ANY MOVES WHICH THE USSR COULD BE ENCOURAGED TO MAKE IN THE DIRECTION OF CONVERTIBILITY OF CURRENCY AND MORE OPENNESS WITH REGARD TO MONETARY AND FINANCIAL STATISTICS WOULD BE WELCOME. IT WOULD SEEM UNLIKELY THAT SOVIET PARTICIPATION IN MULTILATERAL PROGRAMS DEALING WITH ENERGY AND RAW MATERIALS WOULD BE HELPFUL AT THIS STAGE, ALTHOUGH THE TIME MAY COME WHEN THIS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED.

11. LEVERAGE. GIVEN THE UNEVENNESS AND VULNERABILITIES OF THE SOVIET ECONOMY, IT IS NATURAL TO SPECULATE ABOUT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF VARIOUS KINDS OF PRESSURES WHICH THE NON-COMMUNIST WORLD COULD BRING TO BEAR ON THE USSR WITH THE AIM OF INDUCING HER TO FOLLOW CERTAIN LINES OF POLICY OR REFRAIN FROM A GIVEN COURSE OF ACTION.
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EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN THAT TRADE EMBARGOES, CONTROLS ON STRATEGIC EXPORTS, CREDIT RESTRICTIONS AND SO ON HAVE NOT REALLY BEEN VERY USEFUL IN ACHIEVING THESE AIMS; SUCH MEASURES MAY HAVE DELAYED SOVIET DEVELOPMENT IN SOME AREAS, BUT THEY HAVE NOT PREVENTED IT. INDEED, IN THE STRATEGIC FIELD, THEY MAY HAVE STIMULATED SOVIET INDIGENOUS EFFORTS IN A WAY WHICH WOULD NOT HAVE OCCURRED IN THE ABSENCE OF WESTERN CONTROLS. A CLAMP-DOWN ON GRAIN EXPORTS IS SOMETIMES SUGGESTED AS AN EFFECTIVE WEAPON AGAINST THE SOVIET UNION, BUT MY CONVICTION IS THAT SUCH A STEP, EVEN IF IT COULD BE EFFECTIVELY IMPLEMENTED BY ALL EXPORTING COUNTRIES (WHICH IS DOUBTFUL) WOULD NOT BRING THE DESIRED RESULTS. ON THE CONTRARY, IT WOULD CAUSE THE SOVIET REGIME TO IMPOSE SACRIFICES ON ITS OWN PEOPLE AND WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO AN INWARD-TURNING, RESTRICTIVE POLICY ENGENDERING HOSTILITY AND TENSION IN RELATIONS WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD. CREDIT RESTRICTIONS ARE UNLIKELY TO BE ANY MORE PROMISING, ALTHOUGH IT CLEARLY WOULD BE DESIRABLE IF GREATER COORDINATION EXISTED AMONG THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES CONCERNING THEIR CREDIT POLICIES TOWARD THE USSR. THE DIFFICULTIES OF ACCOMPLISHING THIS, HOWEVER, PRESUMING THAT IT MIGHT INVOLVE SOME SELF-DENIAL ON THE PART OF COUNTRIES ANXIOUS FOR COMMERCIAL REASONS TO TRADE WITH THE SOVIET UNION, ARE FORMIDABLE.

12. MY CONCLUSION IS THAT, IN THE COMPLEX AND COMPETITIVE WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE, AND GIVEN THE BASIC RESOURCES AND POTENTIAL OF THE SOVIET UNION, EMBARGOES AND CREDIT FREEZES OR CONTROLS ARE UNLIKELY TO BE EFFECTIVE IN COMPELLING THE SOVIETS TO FOLLOW A DESIRED COURSE OF ACTION. IN THE MOST SERIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES, U.S. ACTIONS IN TERMS OF INCREASING ITS MILITARY EXPENDITURES ARE CERTAIN TO BE MORE PERSUASIVE, AS ARE IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH THE PRC, IF THESE SHOULD BE JUSTIFIED ON THEIR OWN MERITS. OTHERWISE, THE PRESENT POLICY OF SLOWLY BUILDING A WEB OF AGREEMENTS AND PROJECTS REFLECTING THE MUTUAL INTERESTS OF BOTH SIDES, AND GRADUALLY DEVELOPING THEM TO ENCOMPASS MORE AND MORE INDIVIDUALS AND INSTITUTIONS IN THE SOVIET UNION, WOULD APPEAR TO BE THE MOST SENSIBLE AND PROMISING AVENUE TO FOLLOW.
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THE PROCESS IS TIME-CONSUMING AND THE IMMEDIATE GAIN IN LEVERAGE WILL NOT BE SPECTACULAR, BUT OVER THE LONG HAUL IT WILL BE THE MOST EFFECTIVE IN PROMOTING REASONABLE POLICIES AND RESTRAINT ON THE PART OF THE USSR.

13. MILITARY STRENGTH. IN TERMS OF MILITARY STRENGTH, THE USSR IS OBVIOUSLY A FORMIDABLE POWER; ITS CAPACITY IN ALL FIELDS OF MILITARY ENDEAVOR IS GROWING AND HAS

LED SOME OBSERVERS TO THE CONCLUSION THAT IT SEEKS
ABSOLUTE SUPERIORITY OVER THE U.S. IN THE FAIRLY NEAR
TERM, PERHAPS WITH THE AIM OF DEFEATING THE U.S.
MILITARILY. I AM NO EXPERT IN THIS FIELD AND, MOREOVER,
THE FACTS AT LEAST IN SOME AREAS ARE HARD TO COME BY.
CERTAINLY, THE QUESTION OF INTENTIONS IS A PERPETUAL
RIDDLE. WHILE NOT IN ANY WAY WISHING TO UNDERESTIMATE
THE SOVIET MILITARY CAPABILITY OR TO ASCRIBE UNDULY
BENIGN INTENTIONS TO THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP, MY INCLINATION
IS NOT TO BE OVERLY ALARMIST ABOUT THE SITUATION.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 4 MOSCOW 14255

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

THE SOVIET LEADERS, LIKE THEIR TSARIST FOREBEARS, SEEM
PERSUADED THAT A LARGER MILITARY FORCE THAN ANYONE ELSE
WOULD THINK RATIONAL IS NEEDED FOR THEIR NATIONAL
SECURITY. ADDITIONALLY, THE IMPROVEMENTS WE HAVE SEEN
AND WHICH ARE PROJECTED IN CONNECTION WITH THE WORLD-
WIDE OPERATING CAPABILITY OF SOVIET MILITARY AND NAVAL
UNITS CAN BE EXPLAINED AS THE NATURAL RESULT OF THE
INTENT BY A SUPERPOWER TO HAVE THE CAPABILITY TO ACT
LIKE A SUPERPOWER ON A GLOBAL BASIS. I HAVE NEVER BEEN
PERSUADED THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAS A BLUEPRINT FOR
WORLD CONQUEST, MUCH LESS FOR THE MILITARY CONQUEST OR
DEFEAT OF THE US; I ASSUME THAT THE SOVIET LEADERS ARE
RATIONAL (AND, INDEED, THE WHOLE OF SOVIET HISTORY REVEALS
A TROUGH DEGREE OF PRUDENCE AND CAUTION IN FOREIGN
INTERVENTIONS) AND I FIND IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO
BELIEVE THAT THEY WOULD SERIOUSLY CONTEMPLATE ANYTHING
LIKE A FIRST STRIKE AGAINST THE US IN CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE
THE US POSSESSES A FEARSOME RETALIATORY CAPABILITY WHICH
IN CONSIDERABLE DEGREE IS INVULNERABLE. RECENT ATTENTION
IN THE WEST TO THE ALLEGEDLY MASSIVE SOVIET CIVIL DEFENSE
EFFORT, AND TO THE POSSIBILITY THAT THIS COULD ALTER THE
STRATEGIC BALANCE, STRIKES ME AS EXAGGERATED. WHILE PAPER
PLANS MAY EXIST, AND PLANTS MAY BE LOCATED WITH A VIEW

TO MINIMIZING THE EFFECTS OF ATTACK, I HAVE YET TO SEE
ANY CONVINCING EVIDENCE OF THE KIND OF MASSIVE, PUBLIC
INDOCTRINATION AND TRAINING IN CIVIL DEFENSE WHICH
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WOULD BE REQUIRED TO MOUNT AN EFFECTIVE PROGRAM, MUCH
LESS ONE WHICH WOULD HAVE A DECISIVE EFFECT ON THE
BALANCE BETWEEN THE US AND THE USSR.

14. SOVIET INTENTIONS. THE SOVIET UNION, AS A RESULT
OF AN AMALGAM OF HISTORIC AND IDEOLOGICAL IMPULSES, IS
IMPELLED TOWARD EXPANSIONISM, A CONSTANT EFFORT TO
EHHANCE ITS INFLUENCE WHEREVER IT CAN, AND A COMPULSION
TO COUNTER THE US AND CHINA AT EVERY TURN. IT IS
OPPORTUNISTIC IN THE PURSUIT OF ADVANTAGE AND WILL PUSH
INTO SITUATIONS WHERE IT FEELS OPENINGS EXIST AND THE
RISK OF SERIOUS CONFRONTATION WITH THE US IS LOW. IT
CAN PLAN ITS MOVES IN SECRECY, LARGELY DIVORCED FROM
THE PRESSURES OF PUBLIC OPINION, AND IT HAS AS ONE OF
ITS PRIME RESOURCES A POPULATION--PARTICULARLY ITS SLAVIC
COMPONENT--WHICH IS TOUGH, SUBJECT TO MANIPULATION, AND
PATRIOTICALLY INCLINED. ON TH OTHER HAND, THE USSR HAS
WEAKNESSES AND VULNERABILITIES IN ITS ECONOMY AND
AGRICULTURE, IT IS INCREASINGLY SEEN AS AN UNATTRACTIVE
MODEL FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, AND IT IS PALGUES BY
DIFFICULTIES IN CONTROLLING THE EASTERN EUROPEAN COMMUNIST
COUNTRIES, TO SAY NOTHING OF ITS PROBLEMS IN DEALING WITH
INTRANSIGENCE IN THE RANKS OF COMMUNIST PARTIES IN THE
WEST. ABOVE ALL, IT HAS A CONSTANT AND OVERWHELMING
PREOCCUPATION WITH CHINA WHICHWILL CONTINUE FOR THE
INDEFINITE FUTURE. THE ECONOMIC BURDENS OF ITS
MILITARY EFFORT ARE INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO BEAR.
AS A GLOBAL POWER, IT MUST ALSO GIVE ATTENTION TO THE
COMPETING INTERESTS OF OTHER COUNTRIES WHICH AFFECT
SOVIET INTERESTS. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, I SEE THE
SOVIET UNION AS A POWERFUL, DANGEROUS FORCE WHICH MUST
BE COUNTERED AND AGAINST WHICH A BALANCE OF POWER MUST
BE MAINTAINED; BUT I ALSO SEE THE SOVIET UNION AS A
FLAWED COLOSSUS WITH ITS OWN INTRACTABLE PROBLEMS,
WITH NO OVERSHELMING DESIRE OR INTENT TO DESTROY THE
US, AND WITH A SERIOUS AND INCREASING STAKE IN STABILITY
IN SOME KEY AREAS. CHIP BOHLEN TALKED OF THE TIME WHEN
THE SOVIET UNION WOULD ACT "MORE LIKE A COUNTRY THAN A
CAUSE": THIS HAS NOT YET COME TO PASS IN ITS ENTIRETY,
BUT IT IS BEGINNING TO HAPPEN, AND OUR EFFORTS SHOULD
BE DEVOTED TO ENCOURAGING THE TREND.
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15. THE LEADERSHIP. THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP HAS BEEN
IN PLACE FOR AN UNUSUALLY LONG PERIOD OF TIME, AND AS

YET IT SHOWS LITTLE SIGN OF PREPARING TO HAND OVER TO A YOUNGER GROUP. A BASIC WEAKNESS OF THE SOVIET SYSTEM IS ITS LACK OF ANY INSTITUTIONALIZED WAY TO TRANSFER POWER AT THE TOP; WHILE THE PROCESS HAS BECOME SOMEWHAT MORE CIVILIZED OVER THE YEARS, IT IS STILL UNCERTAIN AND POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS. NOT ONLY ARE THE MEMBERS OF THE CURRENT POLITBURO ADVANCED IN YEARS, BUT THE WHOLE CENTRAL COMMITTEE--THE BASIC LEADERSHIP GROUP OF THE SOVIET UNION--IS RELATIVELY OLD. AT THE MOMENT, BREZHNEV APPEARS TO BE IN STRONGER PHYSICAL FORM THAN HE HAS BEEN IN MANY MONTHS, AND HE SHOWS NO SIGNS OF GIVING UP HIS POWER. WHAT CHANGES ARE BEING MADE SEEM TO BE IN THE DIRECTION OF PRESERVING THE OLD GROUP TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE AND HOLDING OFF THE INTRUSION OF YOUNGER MEN. THE LONGER THIS CONTINUES THE MORE DIFFICULT THE ULTIMATE TRANSITION WILL BE. AT THE SAME TIME, IT

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 4 OF 4 MOSCOW 14255

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

SEEMS UNLIKELY THAT THE YOUNGER LEADERS WHEN THEY COME WILL WISH OR BE ABLE TO ALTER PRESENT POLICIES TO ANY FUNDAMENTAL EXTENT. THE POLICY OF "RELAXATION OF TENSIONS" MAKES SENSE FROM THE SOVIET POINT OF VIEW AND IT CAN BE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE. INCLUDED IN THIS WILL BE THE DESIRE TO PUT LIMITS ON THE GROWTH OF STRATEGIC ARMS, WHOSE COSTS POSE SUCH BURDENS ON AN ALREADY STRAINED ECONOMY, BUT THE POSSIBILITIES FOR SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN THE METHOD OF RUNNING THE ECONOMY AND AGRICULTURE APPEAR REMOTE, AS DO THE CHANCES FOR PERMITTING SIGNIFICANTLY MORE OPENNESS AND FREEDOM IN SOCIETY. THE MEN WHO WILL TAKE OVER FROM BREZHNEV AND HIS TEAM WILL BE CAST IN GENERALLY THE SAME MOLD AS THE LATTER, ALTHOUGH THEY WILL HAVE HAD LESS DIRECT EXPERIENCE WITH THE STALIN PERIOD, WORLD WAR II AND THE STRUGGLES AND DEPRIVATIONS OF THE FORMATIVE YEARS OF THE SOVIET STATE. ONE WOULD EXPECT THEM TO BE CONSERVATIVE IN THE SOVIET SENSE, TOUGH-MINDED, INTENT

ON MAINTAINING THEIR CONTROLLING POSITION AS A MINORITY GROUP, PRAGMATIC AND PREPARED, AS SOVIET LEADERS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN, TO BEND IDEOLOGY TO SUIT REALITY. MORE SECURE AND LESS RIDDEN BY AN INFERIORITY COMPLEX VIS-A-VIS THE WEST, SUCH MEN CONCEIVABLY WOULD FEEL LESS NEED TO ASSERT SOVIET SUPERIORITY AT EVERY TURN AND MAY BE INCLINED TO DEAL MORE REALISTICALLY WITH INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS. WE SHOULD BE PREPARING NOW TO DEAL WITH THE NEW LEADERS, WHO WILL
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BE APPEARING IN A SHORT TIME, AND THINKING OF HOW BEST TO INFLUENCE THEM I THE DIRECTION OF BRINGING THE SOVIET UNION MORE INTO THE MAINSTREAM OF THE WORLD SYSTEM.

16. US POLICY. STEADINESS, FIRMNESS AND PERSISTENCE ARE ATTRIBUTES WHICH WILL CONTINUE TO BE REQUIRED IN THIS EFFORT. WE SHOULD NOT UNDERESTIMATE OUR OWN STRENGTHS NOR GIVE WAY TO DESPAIR IN THE FACE OF THE SOVIET CHALLENGE. WE ARE ENGAGED IN A STRUGGLE AND CAN NEVER AFFORD TO FORGET THAT IT IS DEADLY SERIOUS, BUT OUR ASSETS ARE TREMENDOUS AND, BARRING EGREGIOUS FOLLY, WE HAVE EVERY REASON TO BE CONFIDENT OF THE OUTCOME. WE HAVE INFLICTED GRIEVOUS WOUNDS ON OURSELVES, BUT THE PROCESS OF NATIONAL HEALING AND RESTORATION IS TAKING PLACE BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE. WE AGAIN HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY, BY DEMONSTRATING THE STRENGTH AND JUSTICE OF OUR SYSTEM, TO COUNTER MORE EFFECTIVELY THE SOVIET THRUST, AND THIS AT A TIME WHEN THE APPEAL OF THE SOVIET UNION AS AN ATTRACTIVE MODEL AND AS A SOURCE FOR MODERN TECHNOLOGY IS ON THE WANE. WHILE MAINTAINING OUR DEFENSES, KEEPING OUR ALLIANCES STRONG AND EVIDENCING DETERMINATION TO DO WHAT IS NECESSARY IN THE WORLD TO PRESERVE THE STRATEGIC EQUILIBRIUM AS WELL AS REGIONAL BALANCES, WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO ACT TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION IN A MANNER CALCULATED TO DIMINISH TENSIONS, TO EXPAND COOPERATION IN AREAS OF MUTUAL INTEREST, AND TO RESTRAIN THE ARMS RACE. IT IS URGENT THAT THE SALT PROCESS CONTINUE. TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS HAVE THEIR OWN IMPETUS, AND UNDUE DELAY RISKS THEIR ASSUMING ASCENDANCY.

17. IN THE TRADE FIELD, WE SHOULD MOVE TO GRANT MFN, A STEP WHICH WOULD HELP IN THE DIRECTION OF PUTTING COMMERCE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES ON A SOUNDER, MORE BALANCED BASIS AND WOULD REMOVE A PSYCHOLOGICAL IRRITANT OF IMPORTANCE TO THE USSR. CREDITS IN REASONABLE AMOUNT SHOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE TO US BUSINESSMEN TO ENABLE THEM TO COMPETE WITH OTHER COUNTRIES, BUT THERE SHOULD BE CAREFUL SUPERVISION OVER THE PROJECTS INVOLVED. THE PROBLEM OF EMIGRATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS SHOULD BE SEPARATED FROM TRADE AND THE EFFORT TO LEGISLATE SOVIET COMPLIANCE

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WITH INTERNATIONAL NORMS; OUR EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN THAT THE LATTER SERVES ONLY TO WORSEN THE SITUATION.

18. WE CANNOT BE INDIFFERENT TO HUMANITARIAN CONCERNS IN REGARD TO THE SOVIET UNION AND WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO UTILIZE THE HELSINKI ACCORD AS A TOOL TO PRESS FOR MORE EMIGRATION, GREATER FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT AND SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION OF FAMILY REUNIFICATION CASES. PROGRESS TYPICALLY WILL BE SLOW AND DISAPPOINTING, BUT IT CAN COME, AND IT IS MORE LIKELY TO DO SO IN CONDITIONS OF NON-CONFRONTATION AND THE ABSENCE OF OVERT GOVERNMENTAL PRESSURE; INDEED, INCREASED TENSIONS WILL ACT TO STIFLE IT. WHILE ESCHEWING FORMAL GOVERNMENTAL PRESSURE THROUGH LEGISLATION, WE CAN BE FRANK IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE OFFICIAL COMMENTARY ON SOVIET VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS; THE SOVIETS UNDERSTAND PRINCIPLE AND, DESPITE THEIR INEVITABLE PROTESTS, ARE NOT LIKELY TO ALLOW COMMENTS BASED UPON OUR PRINCIPLES TO DETER THEM FROM REACHING ACCORDS ON UNRELATED CONCRETE ISSUES. A FORTHRIGHT STANCE IN EXPRESSING OUR HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS MIGHT ALSO DIMINISH U.S. DOMESTIC PRESSURES FOR UNWISE ATTEMPTS TO IMPOSE LEGISLATIVE CONSTRAINTS.

19. OUR EXTENSIVE PROGRAMS OF SCIENTIFIC, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE WITH THE USSR SHOULD CONTINUE, BUT AN INCREASED EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO IMPROVE SUPERVISION AND COORDINATION ON THE U.S. SIDE TO INSURE A REASONABLE BALANCE OF BENEFITS, AND THE SPECIFIC EXCHANGES THEMSELVES SHOULD BE REVIEWED REGOROUSLY TO PRUNE OUT THOSE WHICH ARE MARGINAL OR DISADVANTAGEOUS. WE MUST FOLLOW THESE AND OUR OTHER BILATERAL AGREEMENTS WITH CLOSE ATTENTION TO ENSURE THAT THE SOVIETS COMPLY SCRUPULOUSLY WITH THEIR COMMITMENTS, EVEN ON SECONDARY MATTERS, AND IF THEY FAIL TO DO SO, BE PREPARED TO TAKE PROMPT STEPS TO DENY TO THEM COMPARABLE BENEFITS FROM THE AGREEMENTS.

20. LASTLY, I WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE CONTACT AND CONSULTATION ACROSS THE BOARD BETWEEN US AND SOVIET OFFICIALS ON FOREIGN POLICY. REGULAR CONSULTATION SESSIONS, AT LEAST ON AN ANNUAL BASIS, COULD BE ESTABLISHED, ALONG THE LINES OF THOSE ALREADY SET BY THE BRITISH AND FRENCH, TO REVIEW PROBLEMS IN EACH AREA OF THE WORLD, AS WELL AS

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INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AND MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS. A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF THIS IS DONE AT PRESENT, SOMETIMES AT A VERY HIGH LEVEL, BUT THERE WOULD BE ADVANTAGE IN INSTITUTIONALIZING THE PRACTICE. SUCH EXCHANGES WOULD BE EDUCATIONAL FOR BOTH SIDES, WOULD PROMOTE THE HABIT

OF CONSULTATION, AND IN SOME INSTANCES COULD SERVE TO
DEFUSE POTENTIAL POINTS OF CONFLICT OR ANTICIPATE
PROBLEM AREAS.

21. CONCLUSION. FROM THE ABOVE LENGTHY BUT FAR FROM
ALL-INCLUSIVE COMMENTS, I TRUST IT EMERGES THAT I LEAVE
MOSCOW IN A BASICALLY OPTIMISTIC MOOD ABOUT THE PROBLEMS
OF DEALING WITH THE SOVIET UNION. GIVEN THE DIFFERENCES
ON BOTH SIDES AND THE UNDERLYING HOSTILITY ENGENDERED
BY COMMUNIST IDEOLOGY, THE PROCESS CAN NEVER BE AN EASY
ONE, AND PROBABLY ONLY THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED IN MOSCOW
CAN HAVE A FULL APPRECIATION OF THE GRINDING, UNPLEASANT
NATURE OF DAY-TO-DAY DEALINGS WITH SOVIET OFFICIALDOM
AND OF THE DEPRESSING EFFECTS OF CONSTANT EXPOSURE TO
SOVIET PROPAGANDA AND ITS INCREDIBLE HYPOCRISY.
FORTUNATELY, HOWEVER, THERE ARE COMPENSATING FACTORS,
AND, OVER AND ABOVE THE PROBLEMS OF DAILY EXISTENCE AND
SUCH BIZARRE TWISTS AS THE SOVIET MICROWAVE RADIATION
OF OUR EMBASSY, I DERIVE SATISFACTION AND RENEWED HOPE
FROM THE POSITIVE STEPS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCOMPLISHED IN
THE PAST FEW YEARS. I FEEL PRIVILEGED TO HAVE PLAYED
SOME PART IN THEM AND I EARNESTLY HOPE THAT THE FOUNDATION
WHICH HAS BEEN LAID WILL SERVE AS A BASE FOR ACCOMPLISHING
MORE FAR-REACHING STEPS IN THE FUTURE IN THE DIRECTION OF
A SOUNDER AND MORE NORMAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO
POWERS ON WHICH THE PEACE OF THE WORLD DEPENDS.
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